

Senator is, but the taxes go into effect. Another smokescreen is, you have 10 years of tax increases, fee increases, and the program is 6 years long, but the taxes are 10 years long. So it is nice for the CBO to say: Yes, this is balanced and maybe even has a surplus in it. But over the long term, this program does not cost just \$848 billion. I hope I answered your question.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. You did. It is interesting because you say maybe it is going to be break even. How is it going to break even? I ask my colleague from South Dakota, who is a cosponsor of this motion: How is it going to break even? With $\frac{1}{2}$ trillion in Medicare cuts, $\frac{1}{2}$ trillion in tax increases, is that the way we ought to be saying to the American people we will reform health care? Have we lost the purpose of the bill, to make health care more affordable and accessible to the American people? I ask my colleague, the Senator from South Dakota, who has worked on this issue for a long time, is that the concept of break even?

Mr. THUNE. The Senator from Texas has touched on a very important issue. The motion she offers, and which I cosponsor, does lay out what is a simple principle of fairness that most Americans understand. When you implement public policy, if you are going to raise taxes, you ought to align the tax increases and the benefits so they start at essentially the same time. What this bill does is it starts collecting taxes, increases taxes on Americans 4 years before the major benefit provisions kick in. On January 1 of 2014, 99 percent of the spending under the bill kicks in. But the tax increases begin less than 3 weeks from today. Sixteen days from now is when the tax increases in the bill start. A tax on prescription drugs, a tax on medical devices, a tax on health plans—all begin 16 days from now. A lot of those taxes will be imposed upon the American economy and passed on to people and small businesses in the form of higher premiums. People are going to get higher premiums 4 years before they are likely to see any benefit. Ninety-nine percent of the spending under the bill doesn't kick in until January 1, 2014, or 1,477 days from now. Most Americans, as they listen to the debate, believe as I do, as a simple principle of fairness, you ought to align the benefits and the taxes. We had a vote yesterday on the Crapo motion that would recommit all the tax increases. Many of us believe raising taxes on small businesses when you have an economy in recession is not a smart thing to do; it is going to cost us a lot of jobs. Small businesses have made that clear. I also think, in addition to the principle of fairness that is at play, when it comes to raising taxes 4 years prior to the benefits kicking in, you also need to have a transparent sort of understanding about what the cost of the bill is going to be.

One of the reasons the revenue increases, the tax increases were begun

immediately or 16 days from now, but the majority of the spending, 99 percent, doesn't occur until January 1 of 2014 and beyond is to understate the true cost. They wanted to bring the cost of the bill in under \$1 trillion.

If you can see, starting this year and going through 2019, it ends up at about \$1 trillion or \$1.2 trillion on this chart. But if you look at the fully implemented period; that is, 2014, when the benefits and spending begin, and take that through the next 10 years, the total spending in the bill is \$2.5 trillion over a 10-year period.

That is one thing the American people need to know. One of the reasons this is being done, tax increases starting January 1 next year or 16 days from now, most of the benefits not starting until 1,477 days from now, is so they can say this is only a \$1 trillion bill or under \$1 trillion, the way it has been advertised, when, in fact, it is going to cost \$2.5 trillion when fully implemented.

We are here 16 days before the Christmas holiday, and there are things Congress needs to do. There are a number of fairly urgent matters that need to be dealt with before the end of the year, some of which have been mentioned this morning. But trying to jam through a new health care program, a \$2.5 trillion expansion of the Federal Government in Washington, 70 new government programs, trying to jam it through in the next 9 days or so before Christmas seems to be done more out of a political necessity, the need for a political accomplishment or a political victory, than it does with making good public policy. As the American people are approaching this holiday season, the best thing we can do, the best Christmas gift we could give the people, frankly, is for Congress to adjourn and go home before passing this \$2.5 trillion expansion.

What does it mean? If you are a small businessperson, the Christmas gift you get this year is a big lump of coal from the Congress in the form of higher taxes. If you are a senior citizen, 1 of the 11 million who are on Medicare Advantage and this bill passes, your Christmas gift this year is benefit cuts. The same thing applies to many of our providers—hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, hospices. If you are an average American family who is worried about the high cost of health care, your Christmas gift this year is, if this bill passes, that your health insurance premiums will continue to go up year over year at twice the rate of inflation. You lock in higher premiums for most people across the country, you raise taxes on small businesses, you cut benefits to Medicare beneficiaries and, for future generations, you create a \$2.5 trillion new entitlement program they will be paying for, for as far as the eye can see.

The CMS Actuary, last week, said, in addition to all the other things they mentioned—the overall cost of health care is going to go up, 20 percent of

hospitals will close—that the Medicare cuts that are being proposed cannot be sustained on a permanent basis. If that is true, how will this be financed? Either with more taxes or borrowing, putting it on the debt and handing the bill to future generations. That is what we are left with. Once you lock in a \$2.5 trillion expansion of the Federal Government, it is going to be hard to reduce the cost. The spending is not going to go away. The way it will be paid for, if the Medicare cuts are not sustainable, is the tax increases. The increases that are already in here would have to be increased even further or, worse yet, for future generations, if you are a young American, it will be put on your bill.

The Senator from Texas and my colleagues who are here this morning all voted yesterday to get rid of the tax increases in the bill. But the motion she offers and that I cosponsor would at least, as a principle of fairness, make sure those tax increases don't begin before the benefits do.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, the 2 physicians out of the 100 Members of Senate are here this morning. They have talked for a long time about the quality of care. They are the two who have the credibility on this. I would like to ask the Senator from Wyoming, Dr. BARRASSO, to talk about what is going to happen to the quality of health care when you have $\frac{1}{2}$ trillion in Medicare cuts, which we have discussed, and the bill we are discussing today and the motion Senator THUNE and I are offering, that is going to put a higher cost on every prescription drug, every piece of medical equipment. Perhaps you would expand on what kind of medical equipment is needed for people to have the quality of life we have in our country today and then the insurance companies, which are, of course, going to raise the premium of every person who already has coverage.

I ask the Senator from Wyoming, Dr. BARRASSO, in your experience, how is this going to affect the quality of health care?

Mr. BARRASSO. I am grateful to the Senator for bringing this up. I had a telephone townhall meeting last night, and this specific motion the Senator is bringing today came up with great praise from the people of Wyoming who said: She is doing it right, leading the good fight. After I answer the question, I will ask: How do we know the money is even going to be there? That is the question that came up in my telephone townhall. People of Wyoming are concerned, if this passes, it will make health care harder for people in rural States, such as Wyoming and Montana. My colleague from Montana is on the floor. The doctor shortage will worsen. This is the headline on the front page by the Wyoming Tribune Eagle: "Doctor Shortage Will Worsen." There is a lot of concern for the folks in Wyoming and communities where there is a sole